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INFO OCT-01 RSR-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-06 H-02 INR-06 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 IO-11
UPW-01 AID-20 SIL-01 LAB-06 AGR-20 /133 W

R 160910Z AUG 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8718
INFO CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANAG
USDEL FRANCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13078

SUBJ: CONG NONG PARTY'S ELECTION ACTIVITIES

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Izubery DATE 1/26/82
RDS☐ or XD☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☑ RELEASABLE☑
RELEASE DENIED☐
EXEMPTIONS

1. SUMMARY. THE CONG NONG (WORKER FARMER) PARTY IS ENTERING THE AUGUST 29 ELECTIONS WITH A LARGE LIST OF CANDIDATES THAT INCLUDES FEW FARMER OR WORKER REPRESENTATIVES FROM ITS PARALLEL ORGANIZATION, THE VIETNAMESE CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (CVT). MANY OF THE WFP CANDIDATES ARE PERSONALITIES RECENTLY RECRUITED INTO THE PARTY, AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN TO WHAT EXTENT THEY WILL REMAIN UNDER PARTY DISCIPLINE IF ELECTED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CONG NONG PARTY, HEADED BY CVT PRESIDENT TRAN QUOC BUU, IS FIELDING 72 CANDIDATES FOR THE 152 LOWER HOUSE SEATS. CONG NONG STAFFERS SAY THAT THE PARTY EXPECTS TO WIN A MAXIMUM OF 40 SEATS, WITH 20 AS A MINIMUM. BUU HIMSELF HAS SET A TARGET OF "AROUND 20."

3. ONLY 13 CVT MEMBERS ARE ON THE LIST. FOUR OF THEM COME FROM THE CVT'S 21-MEMBER NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD. THE HIGHEST RANKING AMONG THEM IS TRAN QUANG SANG, FIRST GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL CVT AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE TENANT FARMERS FEDERATION, WHO IS RUNNING

IN LONG AN PROVINCE. IN THE SAIGON METROPOLITAN AREA, EMBRACING THE CITY OF SAIGON AND SURROUNDING GIADINH PROVINCE, WHERE 24 SEATS ARE AT STAKE, NONE OF 11 CONG NONG CANDIDATES IS A CVT MEMBER.

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4. THE LIST IS A MIXED BAG. IT INCLUDES 13 INCUMBENT DEPUTIES, MOST OF WHOM HAVE MADE LITTLE IMPACT ON THE WORK OF THE CURRENT LOWER HOUSE. AN EXCEPTION IS RESPECTED NGUYEN BA CAN, THE PARTY'S GENERAL SECRETARY, WHO IS GIVEN A VERY GOOD CHANCE OF RETURNING TO HIS SEAT REPRESENT DINH TUONG PROVINCE IN THE DELTA.

5. IN MILITARY REGION 2, FIVE MONTGANARDS, EVEN THOUGH NOT CONG NONG PARTY MEMBERS, WERE ADDED TO THE LIST AT THE LAST MOMENT IN AN EFFORT TO WIN MONTAGNARD SUPPORT FOR THE OTHERS ON THE TICKET. FOUR CAMBODIANS WERE ADDED IN MR 4 FOR THE SAME REASONS.

6. IN LONG AN PROVINCE, WHERE THE TENANT FARMERS FEDERATION IS STRONG, SANG OF THAT FEDERATION HAS A A CONG NONG RUNNING MATE MRS. NGUYEN THI HAI, A WALTHY PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURER, WHO IS A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE PRESIDENT'S WIFE. ACCORDING TO BUU, MRS. THIEU HERSELF SUGGESTED TO MRS. HAI THAT SHE SEEK CONG NONG SUPPORT.

7. IN BIEN HOA, ANOTHER IMPORTANT CVT CENTER, ONE OF THE TWO CONG NONG PARTY CANDIDATES IS MRS. HUYNH NGOC NU, A FORMER CVT STAFFER THERE AND ONCE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN THE DIEM REGIME, WHO IS NOW A CVT OFFICER IN BIEN HOA AND ALSO ONE OF BUU'S WIVES.

8. ONE OF THE LIST'S FEW BRIGHT LABOR LIGHTS IS DOAN VAN GIAP, ABOUT 40, A FORMER RUBBER PLANTATION WORKER WHO IS CHAIRMAN BOTH OF THE CVT RUBBER UNION'S LOCAL IN BINH LONG PROVINCE AND OF THE PROVINCE COUNCIL. NORMALLY HE WOULD BE A SURE WINNER, BUT REPORTEDLY ON ORDERS FROM THE PRESIDENCY PROVINCE OFFICIALS ARE SUPPORTING DEPUTY NGUYEN QUANG LUYEN, WHO DID NOT WANT TO RUN FOR REELECTION IN GIADINH PROVINCE, WHERE HIS SEAT WOULD BE ENDANGERED BY VOTER KNOWLEDGE OF HIS GOLD SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES.

9. THE PARTY'S CHALLENGE IS NOT ONLY TO COME UP WITH 15 OR 20 WINNERS, BUT WINNERS WHO WILL STICK TOGETHER IN THE LOWER HOUSE. SOME CANDIDATES, HOWEVER, HAVE MUCH CLOSER IDENTIFICATION WITH POLITICAL GROUPS OTHER THAN CONG NONG. MRS. HAI, FOR EXAMPLE, IS BETTER KNOWN FOR HER TIES WITH THE REPUBLICAN MASSES PARTY.

10. A NUMBER OF CVT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING SOME WHO FAVOR POLITICAL ACTION BY LABOR, ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT CONG NONG'S LIST, MOSTLY BECAUSE IF CONTAINS SO FEW GOOD LABOR-TYPE CANDIDATES. THE REGIME,

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HOWEVER, IS APPARENTLY NOT WILLING TO GIVE MANY SUCH CANDIDATES THE ADDITIONAL PUSH THEY NEED TO WIN. SO BUU HAS COME UP WITH A CROSS-SECTION OF CANDIATES, OUT OF WHICH HE HOPES WILL EMERGE ENOUGH WINNERS TO MAKE CONG NONG A NAME TO BE RECKONED WITH IN THE NEXT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.
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